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## AMERICAN ART NEWS.

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JAMES B. TOWNSEND, President and Treasurer,  
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M. E. LOUNSBERRY, Secretary,  
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The office of the AMERICAN ART NEWS is now prepared to procure for patrons and readers expert opinion at a nominal rate on pictures or art objects, to attend to the buying, restoration, framing, cleaning and varnishing of pictures, and to repair art objects, at reasonable rates.

In the interest of our readers, and in order to facilitate business, we are prepared to publish in our advertising columns, special notices of pictures and other art works, with reference to the individual desire of any owner or buyer to sell or purchase any particular example.

Should any of our readers desire any special information on art matters of any kind, we shall be glad to put our sources of information at their service.

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## THE ART TARIFF.

Perusal and study of the opinions of artists, dealers and others on the new art tariff, which we have taken pains to collect, and which are published elsewhere, would seem to prove that it is not generally acceptable, and that, if enacted into law, it will surely cause controversy, confusion and litigation, will diminish revenue to the government, fail to give any protection to those American artists who feel that they need or are entitled to said protection, and will increase, instead of minimize, the importation of cheap and spurious pictures from abroad.

It is evident that the Ways and Means Committee, when they framed this art clause, did not go thoroughly into the question, and did not have the time or inclination to hear intelligent testimony and to study possible results. There is also much misapprehension on the part

of the art public, as to what the art clause in the Payne bill really means. The same public is also unaware of the fact that the exceedingly high duties on other art works, such as antiques, textiles, pottery and porcelains, etc., have been left untouched, that in the case of marble statuary, for example, duty has been increased from 15% to 50%, and that as the new tariff, if adopted, does away with all reciprocity treaties, the present rate of 15% on pictures from all countries except Holland is raised on those produced within the last twenty years to the old figure of 20%.

We believe that the new provision is along the lines on which we have striven, and was meant as a concession to those who favor a specific duty on pictures and statuary, and while we still firmly believe in a specific duty of \$100 on all pictures and statuary produced within the last one hundred years, or rather in Mr. Strauss' suggested modification of a duty of \$100 on all pictures over \$700 in value, leaving the present schedules as they are, we should be willing to accept the twenty-year provision were it not for its inconsistency and the trouble that it will cause.

In all probability the sentiment of artists, dealers and collectors, which seems to be drifting towards the common belief that the twenty-year provision is unworkable, will soon crystallize into some general definite understanding, to be followed by a petition to Congress for either a specific duty, or an extension of the twenty-year clause to fifty years, with exemption of all works by deceased artists.

We cannot spell any victory for the Free Art League, for all its boasting, in the new tariff provision. No one has opposed the abolition of the duty on works by artists of the past. No one has at any time desired to tax Old Masters.

## ACADEMY'S NEW HOME.

It is devoutly to be hoped that the opposition, inexplicable to us, on the part of a few older Academicians and of the New York Times, which eminent journal appears to have been smitten with an attack of Academyphobia—to the building of adequate galleries for the old institution on the beautiful and accessible site of the old Central Park Arsenal—will not succeed in defeating the plan.

The secretary of the Academy has issued a statement, published elsewhere in our columns, to the effect that the members of the organization are almost unanimously in favor of the proposed plan, and that opposition to it is confined to a very few of the older men, who are probably acting under a misapprehension.

Art lovers, and members and friends of, what is after all, the distinctive and representative art organization of the country and the only one controlled by American artists, are exasperated to have the best and most feasible plan that the Academy has had before it, since it left its old Venetian palace downtown, and committed the business crime of investing in lots on the upper west side—delayed at least, by what would seem to be unreasonable and groundless opposition.

Arguments that the park will be encroached upon, when it is distinctly stated in the bill recently passed by the State Senate at Albany, that only the site of the Arsenal should be used, seems to us absurd, and surely the Academy of Design as an art institution, is as worthy of being housed in the park as the Metropolitan Museum, and more so than a menagerie. One writer in the Times bewails the fact that Mr. Carnegie did not carry out his intention of donating funds for the purchase of more lots near the Fine Arts Galleries in West Fifty-seventh Street, and adding to those galleries, because of Academy dissensions. We are glad that he did not do so, for we consider the location of the Fine Arts Galleries a poor one. The record of attendance and sales at the Academy exhibitions, since they have been held there, proves our contention that the location is off the main line of art and leisure travel, and is not one that insures large attendance.

The Arsenal site is both beautiful and accessible, and one that will be accessible to the larger part of the art population for many years to come. As we have said, the proposed plan is the best that has come before the Academy in many years, and if it can be carried out will give it a proper home and add to the attractions of the city. Let it not be defeated by a narrow, selfish and unbusinesslike attitude on the part of any members of the Academy, or by a foolishly sentimental and groundless public fear of park encroachment.

## INDIANAPOLIS (Ind.).

The John Herron Art Institute, the center of the art life of the state, has had a series of unusually interesting exhibitions during the past few months. During September the Tissot Bible pictures were visited by thousands of people. In October there were exhibitions by the Chicago Water Color club; of "Fruit and Flowers," by C. P. Ream; of Persian Textiles and Ornaments (loan); of paintings by Ada L. Stewart; of etchings by Pennell, and engravings by Timothy Cole; and a loan collection of old paintings and copies of the Old Masters, with fine books and bookbindings, a lecture on the latter being delivered by Miss Lovina Knowlton, who has charge of the bookbinding in the John Herron Art School.

## ACADEMY'S ANNOUNCEMENT.

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS:  
Dear Sir: It having been publicly stated that there is grave dissension in the ranks of the National Academy of Design with regard to the project for a building for the Academy on the site of the old Arsenal in Central Park, the council thinks it proper to make official and formal contradiction of this report.

The council itself is unanimously in favor of the project, and at the meeting of the jury for the current exhibition, the 29 members present were also unanimous in its support. At a business meeting of the Academy held on March 10 only one voice was raised against the project. The council has not been able to ascertain that more than a very small number of members, possibly six or eight out of a total of 135 academicians and 105 associates, are in opposition to the idea, and such an opposition on the part of a few of the older members, due, possibly, to misapprehension, is hardly enough to impair the substantial unanimity of the Academy's membership.

For the Council of the National Academy of Design.

H. W. Watrous,  
Secretary.

New York, Mar. 22, 1909.

## OBITUARY.

## Charles M. Kurtz.

Charles M. Kurtz, director of the Albright Gallery at Buffalo, N. Y., died there Sunday last, March 21, after an illness of a few days, following a sitting for his portrait which Sorolla, the Spanish artist, was painting, and during which sitting he was in great pain. He was operated on for Bright's disease, at the General Hospital, March 17. Mr. Kurtz was born in New Castle, Pa., in 1855, and was graduated from Washington and Jefferson College in 1876. He was at one time connected with The New York Tribune, and was for nine years editor of "National Academy Notes." He was director of the art department of the Southern exposition in Louisville, assistant chief of the fine arts department of the World's Fair at Chicago, assistant director of fine arts for the U. S. commission to the Paris exposition in 1900, and assistant chief of the fine arts department of the St. Louis Exposition. Through the influence of Mr. Halsey Ives and other friends, he was made Director of the Albright Gallery in 1905, and conducted the affairs of that institution with intelligence and ability.

## Alfred C. Howland.

Alfred C. Howland, who died at Pasadena, Cal., March 17th, aged seventy-one, was a member of the National Academy of Design. He was born in Walpole, N. H., on February 12, 1838, the son of Aaron P. Howland. After graduating from Walpole Academy, he studied art in this country and abroad, at Düsseldorf and at Paris. In 1872 he married Clara Ward of New York. He became an associate of the Academy in 1872 and an Academician in 1882. He was a member of the Century Club and Artists' Fund Society. In summer he lived at "The Roof-Tree," in Williams-town, Mass., in winter at No. 318 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York City. He was a brother of Judge Howland.

## Joseph A. Thompson.

Joseph A. Thompson, a retired lawyer, who for the last fourteen years had lived at the Salmagundi Club, died there on Saturday night last after a lingering illness. Mr. Thompson was a graduate of Cornell and of the Harvard Law School. He suffered from locomotor ataxia, and gave up his law practice on that account two years ago. He was born in Illinois fifty-four years ago, and was unmarried. His only surviving relative in New York is his sister, Miss Thompson.

He made an efficient officer of the club, was greatly liked and esteemed, and his death is a decided loss to the club.

## Robert Hopkin.

Robert Hopkin, the well-known marine painter, died at his home in Detroit, Mich., March 21. He was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1837, and came to Detroit with his parents eleven years later.

Hopkin's most important public work is a series of six paintings for the Cotton Exchange at New Orleans. He painted many drop curtains, and Chicago, Denver, Toronto and other cities have examples of his scenic art.

After seeing Sorolla's pictures—so filled with brilliant sunshine, a young lady was heard to remark "that she had a good complexion when she went to the exhibition, but came away freckled."